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ABSTRACT

This report draws on a recent survey--the 1997 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF)--to examine child care arrangements and expenses for working families with children under age 13 in the state of Alabama. Key components of the project include a household survey, studies of policies in 13 states, and a database with information on all states and the District of Columbia. This report provides data on the types of child care arrangements families use, the number of arrangements they use, the hours children spend in child care, and the amount families spend on child care. The report begins by describing key facts related to child care in Alabama and defining relevant terms. Findings regarding the types and number of child care arrangements and the hours spent in care are examined for children under 5 years of age. Findings on the numbers of school-age children in supervised arrangements, self-care, and parent/other care follow. Child care expenses are examined for all families overall and for two particular groups of families: those with older versus younger children and families with different earnings levels. Costs in Alabama are then compared to those nationwide. Findings of this report reveal that almost 60 percent of mothers with children under age 5 and over 67 percent of mothers of school-aged children are employed. More than 80 percent of children under age 5 of

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employed mothers are receiving nonparental care, with more than half in full-time care. As children get older, the percentage who are in a supervised care arrangement decreases and self-care increases. More than half of working families with children under age 13 pay out-of-pocket for child care. Working families who pay for care spend almost 10 percent of their earnings on child care. Those with low-income spend about one out of every six dollars earned on child care. (KB)

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State Child Care Profile for Children with Employed Mothers: Alabama

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State Profiles

Assessing the New Federalism

An Urban Institute Program to Assess Changing Social Policies

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Assessing the New Federalism

Assessing the New Federalism is a multiyear Urban Institute project designed to analyze the devolution of responsibility for social programs from the federal government to the states. It focuses primarily on health care, income security, employment and training programs, and social services. Researchers monitor program changes and fiscal developments. Alan Weil is the project director. In collaboration with Child Trends, the project studies changes in family well-being. The project provides timely, nonpartisan information to inform public debate and to help state and local decisionmakers carry out their new responsibilities more effectively.

Key components of the project include a household survey, studies of policies in 13 states, and a database with information on all states and the District of Columbia. Publications and database are available free of charge on the Urban Institute's Web site: http://www.urban.org. This paper is one in a series of discussion papers analyzing information from these and other sources.

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STATE CHILD CARE PROFILE FOR CHILDREN WITH EMPLOYED MOTHERS[1]: ALABAMA

Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families[2]

Child care is a critical issue for families, particularly for families with working parents. The large number of mothers in the workforce has made America's families more dependent on nonparental care and raised public awareness of early care and education as a subject of policy concern. In Alabama, 63 percent of mothers with children younger than 13 were employed in 1997 (table 1). These parents must decide who will care for their children while they work.

This report[3] provides data on

- The types of child care arrangements families use
- The number of child care arrangements families use
- The hours children spend in child care
- The amount families spend on child care

These data reflect the choices that families make, but not the extent to which these choices reflect parental preferences (e.g., whether families are using the care options they want) or parental constraints (e.g., whether they cannot find or afford options they prefer). Data tables 2-7 are at the end of the profile.

TABLE 1. Percentage of Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, by Age of Child

	Percentage of Mothers Who Are Employed, by Age of Child	
	AL (%)	US (%)
Age of Child[4]		
Under 5	59	57
Between 6 and 12	67	66
Under 13	63	63

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Alabama Key Facts

Child care in Alabama for children younger than 5 with employed mothers

- Almost three out of five mothers with children under 5 are employed.
- More than four out of five children under 5 with employed mothers are in a form of nonparental child care such as center-based care, family child care, or relative care.
- More than one-half of children under 5 with employed mothers are in full-time (35 hours or more per week) nonparental care.
- Almost two out of five children under 5, who have an employed mother and who are in nonparental care, are in more than one nonparental child care arrangement each week.

Child care in Alabama for school-age children with employed mothers

- More than two-thirds of mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 12 are employed.
- As children get older, the percentage who are in one of the supervised arrangements analyzed here as their primary arrangement decreases. More than one-fifth of 6- to 9-year-olds are in before- and after-school programs, compared with fewer than a tenth of 10- to 12-year-olds.
- The use of self-care (children are alone or with a sibling under 13) increases as children get older. Fewer than a tenth of 6- to 9-year-olds spend *any* time in self-care on a regular basis compared with almost a quarter of 10- to 12-year-olds.

Child care expenses in Alabama for working families with at least one child under 13

- More than half (54 percent) of working families with children under 13 pay out-of-pocket for child care.
- Working families who pay for care spend almost 1 out of every 10 dollars of their earnings on child care.
- Of families who pay for care, those with earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or "low-earning families," spend approximately 1 out of every 6 dollars they earn on child care. These families spend three times more of their earnings on child care than do "higher-earning families."

Definition of Terms

Types of Care:

Primary child care arrangement – the arrangement in which the child spends the greatest number of hours each week while the mother is at work.

The following are types of nonparental child care:

- *Center-based child care (only for age 4 and under)* – care in child care centers, Head Start, preschool, prekindergarten, and before- or after-school programs.
- *Before- and after-school programs (only for age 6 and older)* – programs designed to care for children before school starts or after school is over. These programs can also be located within schools, community centers, and youth development agencies. The survey did not specifically ask about sports, lessons, or other recreational activities that may sometimes be used as child care arrangements by parents.
- *Family child care* – care by a nonrelative in the provider's home.
- *Babysitter or nanny* – care by a nonrelative in the child's home.
- *Relative care* – care by a relative in either the child's or the provider's home.

In addition, the following are other types of child care:

- *Parent care (called parent care/other care for age 6 and older)* – care given to those children whose mother did not report a nonparental child care arrangement while she worked. This type of care could be provided by the other parent, the mother while she works, or a self-employed mother at home. For school-age children, this may also include enrichment activities such as lessons or sports. Because of the way data were collected in the National Survey of America's Families, these activities are not defined as child care in this profile.
- *Self-care* – regular amounts of time each week in which the child is not being supervised while the mother works. This includes time spent alone or with a sibling younger than 13.
- *Any hours in self-care* – children regularly spending some time in unsupervised settings each week, regardless of whether it is the primary arrangement (i.e., used for the greatest number of hours or while the mother is at work).

Income Groups:

- *Higher-income families* – families with incomes above 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- *Low-income families* – families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (e.g., $25,258 for a family of two adults and one child in the United States in 1997).

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CHILDREN UNDER 5[5]

Almost three out of five Alabama mothers with children under 5 are employed (table 1). Consequently, many children in Alabama spend at least some time in child care during the critical developmental years before they start school.

Type of Child Care Arrangements[6]

- More than four out of five children under 5 in Alabama are in primary child care arrangements with someone other than a parent while their mothers are working (table 2).

- More than half of Alabama's children under 5 are in group settings (39 percent in center-based care and 14 percent in family child care). The remaining children are in relative care (27 percent), the care of a babysitter or nanny (3 percent), or parent care (17 percent) (figure 1).

    - Alabama has proportionally more children under 5 in center-based care than the United States as a whole (39 percent compared with 32 percent) and fewer in parent care (17 percent compared with 24 percent). The state does not differ significantly from the nation in the percentage of children under 5 in other child care arrangements.

By age:

- One-quarter of Alabama's infants and toddlers are in center-based care and slightly fewer than one-fifth are in family child care. In addition, almost one-third are in relative care and a small proportion are in the care of a babysitter or nanny. Almost one-quarter of the state's infants and toddlers are in parent care.

    - The child care arrangements of Alabama's infants and toddlers are similar to the national patterns for this age group.

- Almost three-fifths of Alabama's 3- and 4-year-olds are in center-based care and almost one-tenth are in family child care. The remaining children are in relative care (24 percent), the care of a babysitter or nanny (2 percent), or parent care (8 percent).

    - Alabama's 3- and 4-year-olds are more likely to be in center-based care (58 percent) and relative care (24 percent) than their counterparts nationwide (45 percent and 17 percent, respectively). These Alabama children are also less likely to be in parent care than children in the same group nationwide (8 percent compared with 18 percent).

- Alabama's infants and toddlers are three times more likely to be in pa and 4-year-olds (24 percent compared with 8 percent). Alabama's 3- and 4-year-olds, on the other hand, are more than twice as likely to be in center-based care than the state's infants and toddlers (58 percent compared with 25 percent).

    - These differences between the two age groups reflect national patterns. However, Alabama differs from the United States as a whole in that, nationally, infants and toddlers are also significantly more likely to be in relative care than 3- and 4-year-olds, which is not the case in Alabama.

By income:

- Approximately one-quarter of Alabama's low-income children under 5 are in center-based care and one-seventh are in family child care. In addition, almost two-fifths of the state's low-income children under 5 are in relative care and relatively few are in the care of a babysitter or nanny. One-fifth are in parent care.

    - The child care arrangement patterns for Alabama's low-income families are consistent with those for low-income families in the United States as a whole.

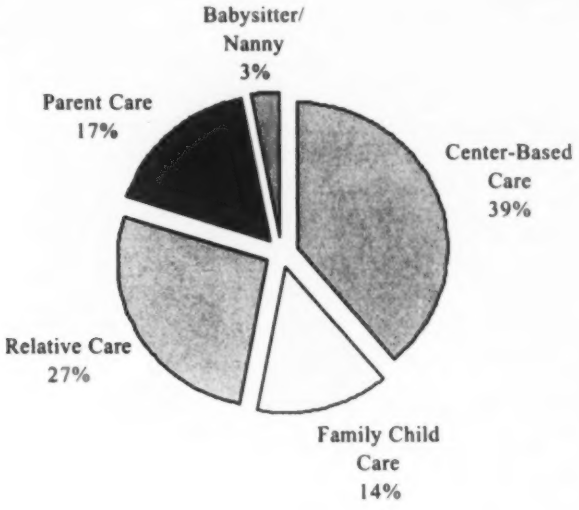
- Half of Alabama's higher-income children under 5 are in center-based care and approximately one-eighth are in family child care. The remaining children are in relative care (20 percent), the care of a babysitter or nanny (4 percent), or parent care (13 percent).

    - Higher-income children under 5 in Alabama are more likely to be in center-based care (50 percent) and less likely to be in parent care (13 percent) than similar children nationwide (35 percent and 21 percent, respectively).

- Alabama's low-income children under 5 are almost twice as likely to be in relative care as the state's higher-income children under 5 (38 percent compared with 20 percent). Higher-income children under 5 in Alabama, on the other hand, are more than twice as likely to be in center-based care (50 percent compared with 24 percent).

    - These patterns are consistent with United States patterns, although nationally, low-income children under 5 are also significantly more likely to be in parent care than higher-income children under 5, which is not the case in Alabama.

FIGURE 1. Primary Child Care Arrangements for Children Under 5 with Employed Mothers in Alabama, 1997



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Hours Spent in Care[7]

- In Alabama, more than half of children under 5 are in full-time care (35 hours or more per week) (table 3).

- The percentage of Alabama's children under 5 in full-time care increases to almost two-thirds when only mothers who are employed full time are considered.

- The use of full-time care for children under 5 is significantly higher in Alabama than in the United States as a whole. Nationally, 41 percent of children under 5 are in full-time care and 52 percent are in full-time care when only mothers working full time are considered (figure 2).

By age:

- Alabama's infants and toddlers are less likely to be in full-time care than 3- and 4-year-olds (49 percent compared with 64 percent), although nationally there is no difference between these age groups.

    - Although it appears that Alabama's infants and toddlers are more likely to be in full-time care than their counterparts nationwide, there is no statistically significant difference between these two groups (49 percent compared with 39 percent).

    - Alabama's 3- and 4-year-olds are more likely to be in full-time care than similar children nationwide (64 percent compared with 44 percent).

By income:

- Alabama's low-income children under 5 are less likely to be in full-time care than higher-income children under 5 (43 percent compared with 64 percent). This differs from the national pattern in that, nationally, there is no difference between these income groups.

    - The use of full-time care by Alabama's low-income children under 5 does not differ significantly from that of their counterparts in the Untied States as a whole (43 percent compared with 40 percent).

    - Higher-income children under 5 are more likely to be in full-time care than similar children in the United States as a whole (64 percent compared with 42 percent).

FIGURE 2. Children Under 5 in Full-Time Care with Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, 1997

Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Note: Full-time care is 35 or more hours per week.

Number of Arrangements[8]

- More than a third of Alabama's children under 5 in nonparental care are in multiple nonparental child care arrangements each week (31 percent in two arrangements and 7 percent in three or more arrangements) (table 4; figure 3).

  - The number of arrangements used each week for children under 5 in Alabama is consistent with the number of arrangements used by their counterparts nationwide.

By age:

- Among Alabama's infants and toddlers in nonparental care, almost two-thirds are in one arrangement each week, approximately one-third are in two arrangements, and relatively few are in three or more arrangements.

  - The number of arrangements used by infants and toddlers in Alabama is consistent with those of similar children nationwide.

- Almost three-fifths of Alabama's 3- and 4-year-olds are in one arrangement, slightly fewer than one-third are in two arrangements, and more than one-eighth are in three or more arrangements.

  - The number of arrangements used by 3- and 4-year-olds in Alabama is consistent with those of similar children nationwide.

- Alabama's infants and toddlers are less likely to be in three or more arrangements each week than the state's 3- and 4- year olds (2 percent compared with 13 percent).

  - The differences in the number of arrangements used by Alabama's infants and toddlers and 3- and 4-year-olds are consistent with national patterns.

By income:

- In Alabama, almost two-thirds of low-income children under 5 in nonparental care are in one arrangement per week, slightly fewer than one-third are in two arrangements, and a smaller proportion are in three or more arrangements.

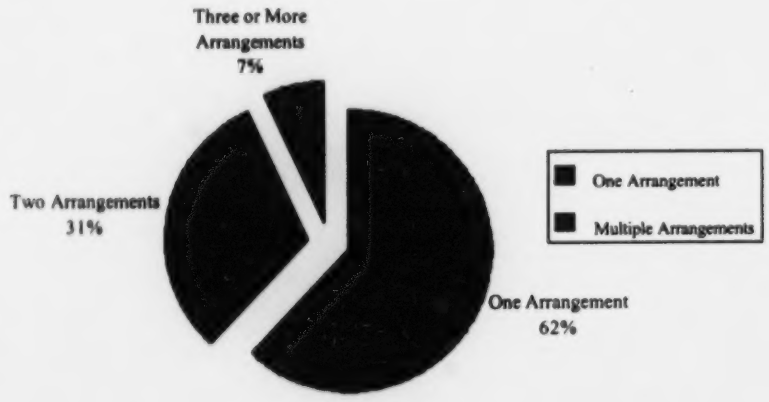
  - The number of arrangements used by Alabama's low-income children under 5 is consistent with those of similar children nationwide.

- Among Alabama's higher-income children under 5 in nonparental care, three-fifths are in one arrangement each week, slightly fewer than one-third are in two arrangements, and approximately one-tenth are in three or more arrangements.

  - The number of arrangements used by higher-income children under 5 in Alabama is consistent with those of similar children nationwide.

- No difference exists in the number of arrangements used by Alabama's low- and higher-income children under 5.
    - ➢ The similarity between low- and higher-income children under 5 in Alabama is consistent with national patterns for these income groups.

FIGURE 3. Number of Nonparental Arrangements for Children Under 5 with Employed Mothers in Alabama, 1997*



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
*Children in nonparental care only.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN[9]

Many children continue to need child care once they start school. More than two-thirds of Alabama's mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 12 are employed (table 1). For those parents who cannot arrange work schedules around school, child care plays an important role in filling the gap between school and when a parent returns home from work. High quality before- and after-school programs can also provide school-age children with activities that will potentially enhance academic and social development (Posner and Vandell 1999). However, under some circumstances, unsupervised care can put children at risk of harm and poor physical, social, and intellectual development (Kerrebrock and Lewit 1999; Peterson 1989).

Supervised Arrangements

- In Alabama, more than half of 6- to 9-year-olds are in one of the supervised primary care arrangements analyzed here while their mothers are working (table 5).
    - Alabama's younger school-age children in supervised arrangements are most likely to be in before- and after-school programs (22 percent) or relative care (22 percent). This pattern is consistent with that of similar children nationwide.
    - The child care arrangement patterns for Alabama's 6- to 9-year-olds are consistent with 6- to 9-year-olds in the United States as a whole.
- Fewer than one-half of 10- to 12-year-olds in Alabama are in one of the supervised primary arrangements analyzed here while their mothers are working.
    - Alabama's older school-age children in supervised arrangements are most likely to be in relative care and are more likely to be in relative care than 10- to 12-year-olds nationwide (26 percent compared with 17 percent).
    - Alabama's 10- to 12-year-olds do not differ from their counterparts nationwide in the use of the other supervised arrangements analyzed here.
- Alabama's children are less likely to use the types of supervised arrangements examined here as they get older (figure 4).
    - Before- and after-school programs play less of a role for this age group than for younger school-age children. In Alabama, fewer than one-tenth of 10- to 12-year-olds are in before- and after-school programs compared with more than one-fifth of 6- to 9-year-olds.

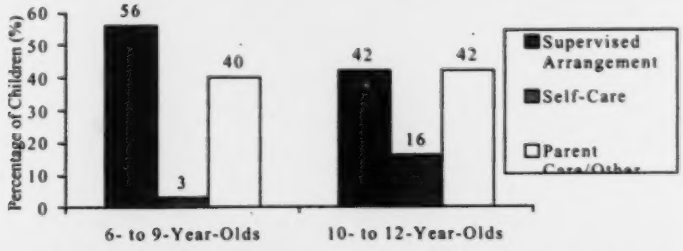
Self-Care

- Three percent of Alabama's 6- to 9-year-olds are reported to be in self-care as their primary child care arrangement while their mothers are working.
    - ➢ The use of self-care doubles in Alabama to 6 percent if 6- to 9-year-olds who spend *any* hours in self-care are included.
    - ➢ The use of self-care as a primary arrangement for Alabama's 6- to 9-year-olds is consistent with the United States as a whole.
- Approximately one in six of Alabama's 10- to 12-year-olds are reported to be in self-care as their primary child care arrangement while their mothers are working.
    - ➢ The use of self-care increases to almost one in four if 10- to 12-year-olds spending *any* hours in self-care each week are included.
    - ➢ The percentage of Alabama's 10- to 12-year-olds primarily in self-care while their mothers are at work (16 percent) and the percentage spending *any* hours in self-care (23 percent) are lower than the national averages for this age group (24 percent and 35 percent, respectively).
- In Alabama, as in the country as a whole, the use of self-care increases as children get older.

Parent Care/Other Care

- In Alabama, there is little difference between age groups in the use of parent care/other care. Approximately two out of five 6- to 9-year-olds and 10- to 12-year-olds are reported to be in this form of care.

FIGURE 4. Primary Child Care Arrangements for 6- to 9-Year-Olds and 10- to 12-Year-Olds with Employed Mothers in Alabama, 1997



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Note: Parent Care/Other Care category includes the proportion of children whose mother did not report using any of the supervised or unsupervised forms of care analyzed here while she worked. For children in this category, parents are arranging their work schedules around the school day to care for their children or using enrichment activities such as lessons or sports.
*Differences are not statistically significant.

CHILD CARE EXPENSES[10]

Child care expenses can consume a large portion of a working family's budget, although not all families pay for child care. Some do not use nonparental child care, while others look for free child care alternatives. For those that do pay for care, child care expenses can be significant. These data show out-of-pocket expenses for all children under 13 in a family regardless of the type or amount of care the family purchases (box).

Child Care Expenses for All Working Families

- More than half of working families with children under 13 in Alabama pay for child care. Among these working families paying for care, the average monthly child care expense is $241, or approximately 1 out of every 10 dollars they earn (table 6).
    - Alabama's working families tend to pay less in average monthly child care expenses than families in the United States as a whole ($241 per month compared with $286 per month). This difference is not surprising because Alabama's average monthly earnings for those families paying for care in 1997 was lower than the national average ($3,813 compared with $4,433).
    - The percentage of Alabama's working families paying for care and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care for those families paying for care are consistent with national averages.

The data presented here

- focus on working families that have at least one child under 13.
- are based on the net out-of-pocket expenses of the National Survey of America's Families respondents and not necessarily the full cost of their children's care. These expenses underestimate the full cost of care if the cost is subsidized by the government or by an employer, or if a portion of the cost is paid by a nonresident parent or by a relative or friend. In addition, these data are based on the combined experiences of many different types of families. All families (for example, families using one hour of care per week and those using 40 hours of care per week; families with one child and those with several children; and families receiving help paying for child care and those that are not) are included in the average child care expenses for Alabama's working families.
- focus on the earnings of families instead of income. Earnings include only wages, but not other sources of income, such as child support, earned income tax credits, and interest from bank accounts.

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By Age

- Almost three-fourths of Alabama's working families with at least one child under 5 pay for care. Among those families paying for care, families with at least one child under 5 spend an average of $277 per month on child care, or 1 out of every 10 dollars of their earnings.

    - Alabama's working families with at least one child under 5 are more likely to pay for care than their counterparts nationwide (71 percent compared with 60 percent).

    - No significant difference exists between Alabama and the United States as a whole in the average monthly child care expenses and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care by families who are paying for care and have at least one child under 5.

- Almost two-fifths of Alabama's working families with only school-age children pay for care. Of those that pay for care, families with only school-age children spend on average $171 a month on child care, or 7.5 percent of their earnings.

    - No significant difference exists between families with school-age children in Alabama and the United States as a whole in the percentage of families paying for care, the average monthly child care expenses, and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care.

- Alabama's working families with at least one child under 5 are more likely to pay for child care than families with only school-age children (71 percent compared with 37 percent). Working families with children under 5 also generally spend more on child care ($277 per month compared with $171 per month) and use a higher portion of their earnings on child care when they do pay for care (10.6 percent compared with 7.5 percent).

    - The differences in the percentage of families paying for care, the average monthly child care expenses, and the percentage of earnings spent on child care between families with children of different ages in Alabama are seen nationally as well.

By Family Earnings

- Fewer than half of Alabama's working families with earnings at or below 200 percent the federal poverty level, or "low-earning families," pay for care. Among those families paying for care, low-earning families spend on average $206 per month on child care, or approximately 1 out of every 6 dollars they earn.

    - The proportion spent on child care is even higher for some low-earning families; almost one-third of Alabama's low-earning families spend more than 20 percent of their earnings on child care (table 7).

    - No significant differences exists between Alabama and the United States as a whole in the number of low-earning families paying for care, the average monthly child care expenses, and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care by families who are paying for care.

- Three-fifths of Alabama's higher-earning families pay for care. These families average $259 a month in child care expenses, or 5.5 percent of their earnings, when they do pay for care.

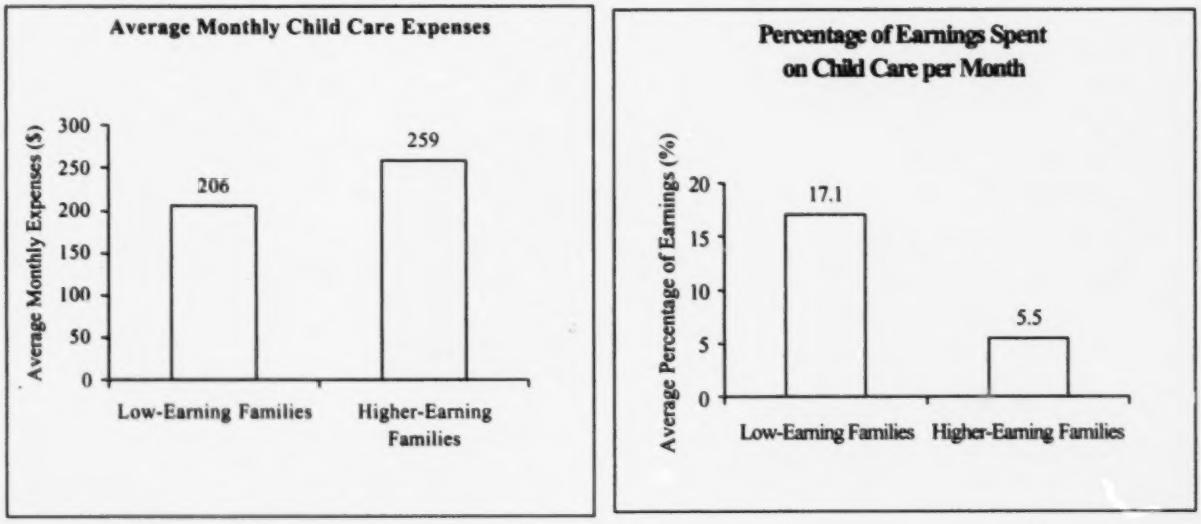
    - No significant difference exists between the percentage of higher-earning families paying for care in Alabama and the percentage of those families in the United States as a whole.

    - Alabama's higher-earning families have lower average monthly child care expenses than higher-earning families nationally ($259 per month compared with $317 per month). These Alabama families also spend on average a lower percentage of their earnings on child care (5.5 percent compared with 6.3 percent).

- Alabama's low-earning families are less likely to pay for child care than higher-earning families (46 percent compared with 60 percent) and they generally pay less in child care expenses when they do pay for care ($206 per month compared with $259 per month). On the other hand, low-earning families spend on average three times more for that care as a percentage of their earnings than do higher-earning families (17.1 percent compared with 5.5 percent) (figure 5).

    - The differences in the percentage of families paying for care, the average monthly child care expenses, and the percentage of earnings spent on child care between low- and higher-earning families in Alabama are seen nationally as well.

FIGURE 5. Monthly Expenses and Average Percentage of Earnings Spent on Child Care by Low- and Higher-Earning Families with Children Under 13 in Alabama, 1997*



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families
*Of those families paying for care

TABLE 2. Primary Child Care Arrangements for Children Under 5 with Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, by Selected Characteristics

		Child's Age		Income as a Percentage of Federal Poverty Level	
	All Children Under 5 %	Younger Than 3 %	3- to 4-Year-Olds %	200 Percent and Below %	Above 200 Percent %
ALABAMA					
Center-Based Care	**39**	25+	**58+**	24+	**50+**
Family Child Care	14	17	9	15	13
Relative Care	27	30	**24**	38+	20+
Parent Care	**17**	24+	**8+**	22	**13**
Babysitter/Nanny	3	4	2	1	4
(Sample Size)	*(289)*	*(150)*	*(139)*	*(148)*	*(141)*
UNITED STATES					
Center-Based Care	32	22+	45+	26+	35+
Family Child Care	16	17	14	14	17
Relative Care	23	27+	17+	28+	20+
Parent Care	24	27+	18+	28+	21+
Babysitter/Nanny	6	7	6	4	7
(Sample Size)	*(4,853)*	*(2,588)*	*(2,265)*	*(2,296)*	*(2,557)*

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Notes: Actual percentages may vary on average +/- 3 percentage points from national estimates, +/- 5 percentage points from overall state estimates, and +/- 7 percentage points from state estimates for children of different ages and income levels. Percentages do not add to 100 as a result of rounding. The NSAF's questions focused on nonparental arrangements and did not include questions about care provided by another parent, care for the child while the parent was at work, or care for the child at home by a self-employed parent. Those respondents not reporting a child care arrangement are assumed to be in one of these forms of care and are coded into the parent care category. **Bold** numbers in the state table indicate that the state estimate is significantly different from the national average. Plus (+) indicates a significant difference between the categories within age and income in a state.

TABLE 3. Number of Hours in Nonparental Care for Children Under 5 with Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, by Selected Characteristics

			Child's Age		Income as a Percentage of Federal Poverty Level	
	All Children Under 5 %	Mothers Working Full Time %	Younger Than 3 %	3- and 4-Year-Olds %	200 Percent and Below %	Above 200 Percent %
ALABAMA						
No Hours in Care	14	12	21+	**4+**	17	12
1-15 Hours	12	10	11	12	17	**8**
16-35 Hours	**19**	14	19	**19**	23	**16**
Over 35 Hours	**56**	**64**	49+	**64+**	43+	**64+**
(Sample Size)	*(286)*	*(229)*	*(148)*	*(138)*	*(148)*	*(138)*
UNITED STATES						
No Hours in Care	18	17	21+	13+	23+	16+
1-15 Hours	16	12	17	14	16	15
16-35 Hours	25	18	23+	28+	21+	27+
Over 35 Hours	41	52	39	44	40	42
(Sample Size)	*(4,823)*	*(3,399)*	*(2,572)*	*(2,251)*	*(2,290)*	*(2,533)*

Source : Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Notes : Actual percentages may vary on average +/- 3 percentage points from national estimates , +/- 5 percentage points from overall state estimates, and +/- 7 percentage points from state estimates for children of different ages and income levels. Percentages do not add to 100 as a result of rounding. The NSAF's questions focused on nonparental arrangements and did not include questions about care provided by another parent, care for the child while the parent was at work, or care for the child at home by a self-employed parent. Those respondents not reporting a child care arrangement are assumed to be in one of these forms of care and are coded as having no hours in nonparental care. **Bold** numbers in the state table indicate that the state estimate is significantly different from the national average. Plus (+) indicates a significant difference between the categories within age and income in a state.

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TABLE 4. Number of Nonparental Arrangements for Children Under 5 with Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, by Selected Characteristics

		Child's Age		Income as a Percentage of Federal Poverty Level	
	All Children Under 5 %	Younger Than 3 %	3- and 4-Year-Olds %	200 Percent and Below %	Above 200 Percent %
ALABAMA					
One Arrangement	62	65	58	64	60
Two Arrangements	31	33	30	32	31
Three or More Arrangements	7	2+	13+	4	9
(Sample Size)	*(244)*	*(116)*	*(128)*	*(121)*	*(123)*
UNITED STATES					
One Arrangement	61	65	56	63	60
Two Arrangements	30	30	31	30	31
Three or More Arrangements	8	4+	13+	7	9
(Sample Size)	*(3,974)*	*(2,009)*	*(1,965)*	*(1,812)*	*(2,162)*

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Notes: These percentages are of children in nonparental child care only. A sizable percentage of children with employed parents, however, are not placed in nonparental child care. See, for example, table 1. Actual percentages may vary on average +/-3 percentage points from national estimates, +/-6 percentage points from overall state estimates, and +/-8 percentage points from state estimates for children of different ages and income levels. Percentages do not add to 100 as a result of rounding. Plus (+) indicates a significant difference between the categories within age and income in a state.

TABLE 5. Child Care Arrangement Patterns for Children Age 6 to 12 with Employed Mothers in Alabama and the United States, by Age Group

	6- to 9-Year-Olds %	10- to 12-Year-Olds %
ALABAMA		
Primary Out-of-School Arrangement [1]		
Supervised Care [2]	56+	42+
Before- and After-School Programs	22+	8+
Family Child Care	9	4
Babysitter/Nanny	3	3
Relative	22	**26**
Self-Care	3+	**16+**
Parent Care/Other Care [3]	40	42
(Sample Size)	*(233)*	*(183)*
Any Self-Care [4]	**6+**	**23+**
(Sample Size)	*(233)*	*(183)*
UNITED STATES		
Primary Out-of-School Arrangement		
Supervised Care		
Before- and After-School Programs	21+	10+
Family Child Care	8+	5+
Babysitter/Nanny	5	4
Relative	21	17
Self-Care	5+	24+
Parent Care/Other Care	40	40
(Sample Size)	*(3,992)*	*(2,753)*
Any Self-Care	10+	35+
(Sample Size)	*(3,998)*	*(2,749)*

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Note: **Bold** numbers in the state table indicate that the estimate is different from the national average. Plus (+) indicates a significant difference between age groups within the state. Percentages do not add to 100 as a result of rounding.

[1]Primary arrangement is where the child spends the greatest number of hours during the week.

[2]Percentages of individual types of care may not add to total percentage of children in supervised care as a result of rounding.

[3]"Parent Care/Other Care" indicates that the respondent reported that the child was not using any of the supervised or unsupervised forms of care analyzed here while she worked. For children in this category, parents are arranging their work schedules around the school day to care for their children or using enrichment activities, such as lessons or sports.

[4]"Any self-care" means that the child regularly spent some time in an unsupervised setting each week, although it was not the form of care in which he or she spent the most hours each week or necessarily while the mother was at work.

TABLE 6. Child Care Expenses for Working Families with Children Under 13 in Alabama and the United States, by Selected Characteristics

	Percentage of Working Families Paying for Child Care %		Average Monthly Cost of Care for Families Paying for Care $		Average Percentage of Earnings Spent on Child Care for Families Paying for Care %	
	AL	US	AL	US	AL	US
All Families	**54**	48	**241**	286	9.5	9.2
(Sample Size[1])	*(626)*	*(10,398)*	*(317)*	*(4,934)*	*(317)*	*(4,934)*
Family Type						
Unmarried	58	52+	**203+**	258+	16.4+	15.6+
Married	52	47+	**260+**	297+	**6.0+**	6.6+
Number of Children Under 13						
One Child	45+	46+	**190+**	243+	8.1+	8.5+
Two or More Children	**63+**	52+	**275+**	321+	10.4+	9.7+
Age of Youngest Child						
Under 5	**71+**	60+	**277+**	325+	10.6+	10.3+
5 or Over	37+	37+	**171+**	224+	7.5+	7.5+
Current Monthly Earnings (relative to family size)[2]						
Low Earnings	46+	40+	206+	217+	17.1+	15.9+
Higher Earnings	60+	53+	**259+**	317+	**5.5+**	6.3+
MKA Education[3]						
High School or Less	46+	43+	**198+**	228+	11.0+	10.4+
Some College or More	**59+**	52+	**261+**	317+	8.8+	8.5+
Parent's Work Status[4]*						
Part-Time	48	38+				
Full-Time	55	52+				
Metropolitan Status*						
Nonmetropolitan	47	47				
Metropolitan	**57**	49				
Race/Ethnicity[5]*						
White/Non-Hispanic	53	49				
Other	**56**	47				
Average Monthly Family Earnings[6]	*$3,813*	*$4,433*				

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Notes: **Bold** indicates that the state estimate is different from the national average. Plus (+) indicates a significant difference between paired subgroups within the state.

[1]For sample sizes of all subgroups, see Giannarelli and Barsimantov 2000.

[2]Low earnings are defined as current earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

[3]MKA is the "most knowledgeable adult." Interviews were conducted with the person most knowledgeable about each child. The mother was the "most knowledgeable adult" for a majority of the children in the national sample. For more on "most knowledgeable adult," see Dean Brick et al. 1999.

[4]The work status of the MKA.

[5]The race/ethnicity category has only two categories because of sample sizes.

[6]For those families paying for care.

*Sample sizes are too small to break down data for average monthly cost of care and average percentage of earnings spent on child care.

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TABLE 7. Distribution of Low- and Higher-Earning Families with Children Under 13 by Percentage of Earnings Spent on Child Care in Alabama and the United States*

	Low-Earning Families %	Higher-Earning Families %
ALABAMA		
Less than 5%	13	53
Between 5% and 10%	23	37
Between 10% and 15%	14	8
Between 15% and 20%	19	2
Greater than 20%	31	0
(Sample Size)	*(140)*	*(177)*
UNITED STATES		
Less than 5%	17	46
Between 5% and 10%	24	38
Between 10% and 15%	18	11
Between 15% and 20%	14	4
Greater than 20%	27	1
(Sample Size)	*(1,943)*	*(2,967)*

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Notes: Low-earning families are families with earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Higher-earning families are families with earnings above 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
*Only families who are paying for care.

Notes

1. For randomly selected children in the sample households, interviews were conducted with the person most knowledgeable about each child. Because the mother was the "most knowledgeable adult" for a majority of the children in the national sample, the term "mother" is used here to refer to this respondent. From these interviews, data were collected about the types of care used, the number of hours the child spent in each form of care, and the child care expenses for the family. For more on the National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) survey methods, including the "most knowledgeable adult," see Dean Brick et al. 1999.
2. The NSAF is a national survey of more than 44,000 households and is representative of the noninstitutionalized, civilian population under age 65 in the nation as a whole and in 13 focal states (Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin). The survey focuses primarily on health care, income support, job training, and social services, including child care. Data from the 1997 NSAF are used here to examine child care characteristics for preschool and school-age children. The NSAF collected child care information on a nationally representative sample of children above and below the federal poverty levels, as well as on a representative sample of children in 12 states (Colorado is not included in these analyses because of the small size of the nonsummer sample for this state. Because of the late addition of Colorado to the Assessing the New Federalism project, responses to the child care questions from a large number of Colorado respondents were received during the summer months and did not provide information on nonsummer child care arrangements, which are the focus of this analysis.)
3. This profile focuses only on data that are statistically different from data on other subgroups within the state or those that are statistically different from the United States. Data not presented in the text may or may not be statistically significant. One should be cautious in interpreting the actual point estimates because of the sizes of the samples. For the data on types of child care arrangements and hours in care for children under 5, confidence intervals around the national point estimates averaged +/-3 percentage points, and the confidence intervals around subpopulation point estimates within states were larger (+/- 7 percentage points for the state estimates of age and income subpopulations). For the data on number of child care arrangements, confidence intervals around the national point estimates averaged +/-3 percentage points, and the confidence intervals around subpopulation point estimates within states were larger (+/- 6 percentage points for the state estimates of age and income subpopulations). For confidence interval information for school-age and child care expense data, see Capizzano, Tout, and Adams 2000 and Giannarelli and Barsimantov 2000.
4. Sample sizes for children under 5: 519 (AL), 9,571 (US); sample sizes for children between 6 and 12: 684 (AL), 11,947 (US); sample sizes for children under 13: 1,080 (AL), 18,905 (US).
5. This analysis focuses only on children under 5 whose mothers are employed and were interviewed during the nonsummer months. In addition, the NSAF asks respondents only about regular child care arrangements. Respondents using a complicated array of arrangements that would not qualify as "regu identified in this study as using a child care arrangement. For more information on types of child care arrangements, number of hours in care, and number of nonparental arrangements for all of the 12 states and the United States, see Capizzano and Adams 2000a, Capizzano and Adams 2000b, and Capizzano, Adams, and Sonenstein 2000.
6. The focus is on the type of primary arrangement in which children under 5 with employed mothers are placed.
7. For this analysis, the hours that each child spent in care across all reported nonparental arrangements were totaled and the child was then placed in one of four categories: "full-time care" (35 or more hours per week), "part-time care" (15 to 34 hours per week), "minimal care" (1 to 14 hours per week), and "no hours in child care" (no regular hours in a nonparental arrangement). This analysis focuses on nonparental arrangements. Although data for hours in care are broken down by full-time care, part-time care, minimal care, and no hours of care, this discussion will focus only on full-time care. Table 3 provides data on the remaining categories.
8. To capture child care arrangements, mothers were asked if the child attended any of three separate categories of center-based care: 1) Head Start; 2) a group or day care center, nursery preschool, or prekindergarten program; or 3) a before- or after-school program. Mothers were also asked about babysitting in the home by someone other than a parent and questioned about "child care or babysitting in someone else's home." A child can be cared for by two different providers within the same category. In these cases, the NSAF captures only one of the arrangements and therefore undercounts the number of arrangements used by that parent. Based on comparisons with other national data sources, however, these undercounts are small.
9. Because school is the arrangement in which children spend the most hours each week, the focus is on child care patterns during the child's out-of-school time. This profile focuses on the category of primary care in which children between the ages of 6 and 12 with employed mothers are placed and the percentage of children in any

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regular self-care. The child care arrangement patterns of 5-year-olds are not discussed in this profile because of the complexity of the arrangements for this age group. Age 5 is a transitional age when some children are in school and others are not. The child care patterns for families with a child in this age group, therefore, can vary substantially depending on whether or not the child is in school. For more information about school-age child care and the methods used to calculate this information, see Capizzano, Tout, and Adams 2000.

10. For more information about child care expenses in the 12 focal states or the nation as a whole, see Giannarelli and Barsimantov 2000.

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